

1 ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

2 An interactive television system includes "connected"
3 receiver units capable of establishing bi-directional
4 connections to remote information stores, such as Web servers,
5 and "disconnected" receiver units unequipped to make such
6 connections. The system supports the use of broadcast triggers
7 that include connectivity values indicating whether an
8 information resource identified by a trigger refers to
9 "connected content" or "disconnected content." The term
10 "connected content" refers to information resources that
11 require bi-directional connections to remote information
12 stores; the term "disconnected content" refers to information
13 resources, such as a locally stored program guide, that do not
14 require such bi-directional connections. Disconnected receiver
15 units identify and reject connected-content triggers by
16 examining connectivity values broadcast as part of triggers.
17 Thus, content providers can broadcast connected-content
18 triggers to connected and disconnected receiver units without
19 interrupting disconnected receiver units with links to
20 inaccessible content. Furthermore, the ability to distinguish
21 between connected and disconnected content allows vendors who
22 sell or lease receiver units to offer a lower level of service
23 to those customers who do not wish to pay for the ability to
24 access connected content.